



**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL  
MIDDLETOWN CONNECTICUT  
JULY 7, 2014**

Special Meeting            The Special Meeting of the Common Council was held in the Council Chamber of the Municipal Building on Monday, July 7, 2014 at 6 p.m.

**Present**

Deputy Mayor Robert P. Santangelo, Councilman Thomas J. Serra, Councilwoman Mary A. Bartolotta, Councilwoman Hope P. Kasper, Councilman Grady L. Faulkner, Jr., Councilman Carl R. Chisem, Councilman Gerald E. Daley, Councilman James B. Streeto, Councilman Sebastian N. Giuliano, Councilwoman Sandra Russo Driska, Councilwoman Deborah Kleckowski, Councilman David Bauer, Sergeant-at-arms William McKenna, Chief of Police, and Acting Council Clerk Linda DeSena.

**Absent**

Mayor Daniel T. Drew and Corporation Counsel Daniel Ryan, Corporation Counsel.

**Also Present**

Directors: William Russo, Michiel Wackers, Wayne Bartolotta, Robert Kronenberger, Linda Bettencourt, Damon Braasch, William McKenna, Guy Russo, Tayna Oliver-Perry, Justin Carbonella, Kathy Morey, Geen Thazhampallath, Brig Smith, Arthur Meyers, Acting Directors Deb Stanley and Eldon Bailey, Salvatore Nesci, Stephan Allison, and Joseph Samolis.

**1. Mayor calls meeting to order.**

**(Pledge of Allegiance)**

The Acting Chair leads the public in the Pledge of Allegiance and calls the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. He welcomes everyone to the meeting.

**(Council Clerk Reads the Call of the Meeting and Mayor declares call a legal call and meeting legal meeting.)**

The Chair declares the call a legal call and the meeting a legal meeting at 6:01 p.m.

**2. Questions to Directors Opens**

Councilman Bauer asks for the Director of Planning. Michiel Wackers comes forward. Councilman Bauer states he worries about the ancillary questions to having those objects at Harbor Park. Is there going to be a City liability. They are city-owned and will we have a liability and have to have someone from the City with them when they are out in the public. Mr. Wackers states they are looking for ways to address your concerns. The Adirondack chairs, trying to find storage for them. He is trying to figure out how to store Adirondack Chairs. He has a meeting set up with Bill Russo, Public Works to go through these issues. They need to be addressed. Councilman Bauer states when the conversation was going on, he didn't think about operational costs and legal liability. I am glad you told me you haven't worked out the storage issues. One thing he brought up is the other operation at Harbor Park and if you are changing the look and feel of the area, he is not sure what the message they are sending when the bathrooms are permanently closed. He asks that Mr. Wackers use his office to change a myriad of ideas people have about Harbor Park. Mr. Wackers responds that he agrees about the bathrooms and the message sent. After you brought that up and he saw Bill Russo the next day and he is aware of it and there is an issue of the sewage system that has to be addressed. That facility, after an event like this weekend, cannot accommodate a crowd like they had. He is addressing the problem.

Councilman Serra asks to address someone from Finance and Public Works. Councilman Serra states the question is about streetlights. William Russo comes forward. Councilman Serra asks about the incurred bills. He states there was supposed to be a savings and the streetlights were not purchased and why were they not purchased. Mr. Russo states it is working with CL & P; according to Jon Hall, they are scheduled to purchase July 31; they had to get the vendor in place for maintenance first. Councilman Serra states we did this last year; what was the time frame. Mr. Russo responds the bond was approved in November. Councilman Serra states it was approved in November and now we have not seen cost savings and have a bill of \$150,000. Mr. Russo states they started immediately on the project. Councilman Serra states it was projected savings and we don't have it but we have incurred costs. Joe Samolis states after it was passed in November, you have to notify CL&P that you are purchasing the lights; then you have to get a vendor in place to maintain the streetlights. We did that and did an RFP

and no one came back to bid on it so we had to go out again. Councilman Serra states he thought it would have been the person who advised us to do this; Mr. Samolis responds in the end, he did not like the way we did the contract. After talking with him and General Counsel, we worked things through. Councilman Serra that is until February and it is three months later. You said it took three months and did a professional service contract. Mr. Samolis states it takes time and it is from February after acceptance of the professional contract. Councilman Serra states we incurred costs and we were supposed to save money. Mr. Samolis states it was unrealistic to think we would have the streetlights purchased quickly. Mr. Russo states we are going back and forth; we are looking at 5,200 lights and CL & P is looking at each of the lights. They are not going to sell them to us without doing an audit and we are trying to get the best price to purchase them. Councilman Serra asks instead of projecting a savings we are paying them. Mr. Russo states the savings would have been there, but they are challenging us on each of the lights. We have been working on this for almost a year with them. Mr. Samolis states Councilman Serra sits on the Task Force and they have been given updates and it is a work in progress. Councilman Serra states we voted on this and saving \$150,000 in the first year and then save so much each year down the road. He asks Councilman Bauer if he remembers anything from Clean Energy. Councilman Bauer states the process may have been protracted but the question is if we could foresee this, is it only the Council looking out for the budget projections. I would hope that just about every member of the municipal work force that if a projection is not being made, it be communicated to someone. We had an energy coordinator and we both sit on the Task Force and we never heard of the element of the electricity shortfall discussed; not ever. Is this something that I as a Councilman need to be in the building every day overseeing the budget; how do we keep track of the budget projections. I understand you can have protracted the timeframe, working out complex contracts; whose responsibility is it to keep within the budget and look out after it. Chair Santangelo states who is the question for. He states we don't have to be in City hall every day; the way we set the budget, but every two weeks we should be looking at expenditures and it would keep us abreast every month and that is how it is done. It has to be done with more effort and we should be looking at it and the only way to monitor the budget. The other way to look at it, this is what we do and we should put more effort into looking at expenditures. Councilman Bauer asks if this is an indictment on Council oversight. Chair Santangelo we can ask ourselves the question. Councilman Serra states it is the executive branch; we appropriate the money and set money. We set the policy and the monies to purchase this and someone didn't do their job, we now have to pay another \$150,000. We didn't budget it and we are taking it out of fund balance and he wants to know why; it is not the Council. We set the policy. He is asking what happened.

Councilman Bauer states he got the spirit of what he wanted out and even if rhetorical the general question is if someone from Finance hazard an answer he would appreciate it. Tayna Oliver Perry comes forward, and states the issue with this appropriation was, during the budget process, we put \$200,000 more in the line item and with the budget and Ron Klattenberg, they stated we would have the savings of the streetlights so they reduced the budget and the streetlights were not put in. In Finance, we look at the budget and pay the bills by processing the payment. If Council did not put the money in there because they thought there would be a savings, well that isn't Finance.

Councilman Giuliano states as he understands it, this appropriation to provide the streetlights, took place later in the year so the budget was set in May of 2013 so whether or not we brought the streetlights or not how could we be off. Ms Perry responds because you budgeted less than we requested. If you look at the budget, the proper amount was requested. Councilman Giuliano states the streetlights had nothing to do with this; Ms Perry responds it has everything to do with this. Councilman Giuliano states the budget was voted on in May for 2013, the decision of the streetlights didn't happen until much later and the budget was passed without consideration of the streetlights. So how can it have been part of the budget? Ms Perry states it was contemplated way before the budget; Ron had worked on energy efficiency for many years and he thought it would happen, but it didn't. Councilman Giuliano asks what; the response from the Council is purchase of the streetlights. Councilman Giuliano asks what are we physically buying. Are we buying the rights to own or will we own them. Mr. Russo states it will be the lights. Councilman Giuliano asks if there is any regard to buying the rights and buying new stuff from the vendor. Mr. Russo states that is why there is a delay. CL&P is auditing the lights and will not sell to us until the last minute and Jon Hall has July 31 and that will be the day we get ownership. We have had conversation about converting to LED lights. We will continue to work this and the delay is with them. Councilman Giuliano states what would happen if we say we don't want them and tell them to keep it and why not buy all new stuff. Mr. Russo doesn't agree it is obsolete and we will pay for 5,200 lights. We are close. Joe Samolis responds they are looking to upgrade the lights and it would increase the cost of the lights and if we purchase now we can retrofit with LED's. Councilman Giuliano states if they put in new lights, we would pay more and he has a sensation they will overpay for old stuff. Mr. Samolis states they are working to get everything they can. C L & P was working on upgrading the Street lights and they would have cost more for us to purchase them. It is a work in progress.

Councilwoman Russo Driska asks since several of us were not on the Council, with regards to \$150,000 that was removed from the budget, what were the Council people told during the presentation when it was approved; were we told the savings would be \$150,000 and were we told it was for the budget starting July 1, 2014. Mr. Russo states Tayna gave the best answer. It is dangerous to set dates when dealing with independent people, especially someone as big as C L & P; they sell lights when they want to. Councilwoman Driska states we were told there was a savings if the lights were bought, we didn't buy them and incurred the bill and now we have to pay it. Is that what you are saying? Mr. Russo states what Tayna said is what happened. Councilwoman Driska asks if C L & P gave us any projection once the process was done, these were the projected savings. Mr. Russo states we know the projected savings once the lights are purchased. Councilman Serra states there was a list of savings for the next 10 years. It was \$150,000 this year and the process from Ron Klattenberg and the consultant who made

us aware of this and if you go along with the timing and this was approved in November. It was there and the Council saw it. There is a savings every year and that is why we budgeted. Councilwoman Russo asks what the remaining dollars of the appropriation are. Mr. Russo states that is the shortfall in other accounts and Tayna could answer that. Ms Perry comes forward and the shortfall for electricity because the Council removed \$300,000 and of the entire amount only \$196,000 is electricity. The figures are accurate; we pay the bills, but they are approved by other departments.

Councilwoman Kasper states we were provided a graph from Finance and fuel increased why. Mr. Russo states there are a couple of reasons; what I don't know is why the lines were cut. He states in February we had 8 snow storms and in March we refueled the generator, about 500 gallons of fuel. The Fuel lines, we project by looking at what was spent in the last three to five years.

Councilman Bauer asks to address questions to the Parking Director. Geen Thazhampallath comes forward. Councilman Bauer states you gave the subcommittee a descent overview and you understand how interested the public is on how parking is run. The change migrating from the current technology to the new technology will save money. There are questions. He got feedback from certain people like the do not ticketing stuff and the new technology will be operating with license plates and you will have a database of a them and he knows a bunch of people who would be concerned about the surveillance aspect and people wondering how some people may end up getting perks. Certain people get to park like employees get free parking; how would that operate with the new technology. Mr. Thazhampallath states the parking pass would be your license plate whether employees or commercial customers; they would have a hang tag for the rearview mirror so that it would be known they are supposed to be there. Councilman Bauer asks tonight there is no Council action, when do you plan to institute changes in parking fees. Mr. Thazhampallath replies it doesn't have to; in August or September, he will ask to go for an ordinance change to go to \$1 an hour even in the lots and it is what works in the KidCity parking lot. Mr. Thazhampallath you are not being asked to change any rates tonight.

Councilman Giuliano asks Mr. Thazhampallath, the kiosks are just for the lots gate controlled. Mr. Thazhampallath states some are going to multi space meters but the way our Main Street is configured we have the latest in Meter technology. The license plate becomes the way you pay; we have to help them to learn their license plate number. I have to come up with a way for them to remember their number and over time people will learn, but they have to educate them. Councilman Giuliano states the history has been good concepts, but execution has not followed the quality of the idea. He hopes it works. Mr. Thazhampallath states he thinks what may have happened in the past, the previous leadership did not have a connection with the town and didn't think about where the town is moving. Having conversations with the Chief and feedback from you before we make this step and hopefully better customer service. Councilman Giuliano asks how many kiosks; Mr. Thazhampallath responds four for Melilli Plaza and explains where they will be. He is planning for two at the Arcade with the new structure. Essentially, \$35,000 a year in maintenance costs for the current vendor and everyone is talking about, how they can't believe how much we are paying. I have their personnel here every day. Councilman Giuliano asks if that is enough kiosks. Mr. Thazhampallath responds the vendor lays out a plan and the patterns of pedestrian traffic. Giuliano the way it works, depending which way I leave the lot, I punch in my license plate number and pay what I am going to pay. You know it is paid for. Mr. Thazhampallath states you take that scenario and for enforcement purposes, once you put it in, it is in the file and he has an application for his phone and can say who paid or didn't and instantly uses the database and says if the person paid or is not paid. We don't keep the license plate numbers; we are using it for parking. There are uses for police purposes, but we don't do that type of work. It is the only use of it. They have the ability, if they choose on the machine to ask them to send a message if the time is about to expire and you can update your time for the meter.

Councilman Faulkner asks we are basically saying all the stuff we bought before is obsolete, not working, and no good. Mr. Thazhampallath states it is not functioning; if we weren't having customer service problems, at one point in time were averaging over 300 calls a month. But we were responding to afterhour's calls with people stuck behind the gate, jammed tickets. He tells one story and multiple that month after month. Councilman Faulkner asks what the vendor says. Mr. Thazhampallath states he is after the vendors to fix this and we are at a point that it is functionally not working for us. Councilman Faulkner we are stuck with the equipment. Mr. Thazhampallath states it was a large purchase. Councilman Faulkner we are convinced this is the way to go; Mr. Thazhampallath he can't guarantee, but he can tell him about the process that brought him to this. He feels good about the process getting to this point and he is confident telling you that we are at a place where we need to do something. Councilman Faulkner states it sounds like you have to register their plate. Mr. Thazhampallath park your vehicle, there will not be a gate or ticket; go to the kiosk with your plate number, key in your plate number and pay. Councilman Faulkner the difference between this and the last technology, you had to do all these things with machine, but now you only have one thing. Mr. Thazhampallath states currently, you have to push your button and get a ticket and you put it in your pocket; we encourage you to go to the kiosk and if it reads it you pay and then you go to the gate and have to insert it. We think it is up to date, but it is not the way to go; license plate technology is it and it gives us more capabilities. Councilman Faulkner you don't have to have all this other technology. Mr. Thazhampallath states you don't need that; for enforcement purposes he was looking at license plate reader to snapshot the plates; we would just scan. Saving the money, there is an application that talks wirelessly to the cellphone and can scan the plate and it comes up and show if you paid. Councilman Faulkner asks if Melilli has the most issues. Mr. Thazhampallath both locations.

The Chair it is now 7 p.m. if we want to continue, we should recess the meeting and start the regular meeting and come back to this after the regular meeting is opened.

**Motion to Recess**

Councilman Serra moves to recess questions to directors and his motion is seconded by Councilwoman Kleckowski. The vote is unanimous and the Acting Chair calls a recess at 7:00 p.m.

**Meeting Reconvenes**

The Acting Chair reconvenes the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

The Chair (Mayor Drew) recognizes Councilman Serra who asks for Michiel Wackers and Chief of Police McKenna relative to 8J. He asks looking at page 14 relative to traffic pattern, did Middletown Traffic Authority endorse these suggestions and did the State traffic endorse these suggestions. He states he opposes closing the ramp at Harbor Park making it a one way in and one way out. He is wondering if it is okay with Public Safety. The whole pattern projected. The report is on the agenda and will accept it on file but not for endorsement. Did State Traffic and Middletown Traffic endorse the suggestions; are the correct for the norm of traffic patterns. Mr. Wackers states they are proposals and Riverfront Development Commission has endorsed them and DOT is in the process of vetting them. They have had a meeting with DOT and they are working with us to come up with concept plan. Councilman Serra states these are proposals and you don't know if they can work because they have not been reviewed. Mr. Wackers there has been no memo from the Police Department, but they have been at the table. Chief McKenna explains that staff has been at the meetings and they are at the table with DOT and Traffic Plan. Councilman Serra States so the report tonight is just proposals and are not endorsed by any traffic commissions. Councilman Serra states the Council will accept the report and not endorse it tonight.

Wackers DOT is looking at the proposals and will let us know what they think of the proposals after September. Councilman Serra states he is concerned about the one way in and one way out. He would like to have some other way for ambulance, police and fire and to ensure it is safe.

Councilman Daley states as chairman of the commission he would state that page 14 while this may be the plan that DOT has presented at this point, there has been some discussion with DOT and commission that we support further discussion about a different plan so I don't think anything has been cast in stone as to what is going to happen although DOT is fully involved that they will have to do something about the 17 connector entrance on to Route 9 because it is one of the most dangerous entrance ramps in the State. As Michiel pointed out, DOT will have further input with the public as they do with any major project, will hold their own public meetings. What you don't see in the plan, is part of a larger plan that would include signage and other types of measure that would change the traffic flow in and out of the area. It is not that it is one way in and one way out and that is from Harbor Park, but the riverfront, that is not true and that is only one piece that is not resolved. DOT is working with us and with whatever they do needs to work with the City to improve visual and pedestrian access to the riverfront.

Councilwoman Kleckowski has questions for the Parking Director. Councilman Bauer states Deputy Director of Finance. Tayna Oliver Perry comes forward. Councilman Bauer states the conversation they had before, he has questions about the Grant Confirmations; the first is 8C. He states it is a negative grant; are you aware why we would have this and I don't understand how we process a negative grant. Ms Perry states the reason we have a negative grant is that they came with an appropriation for the \$100,000 which we put in their grant fund and then they put the same amount in again and they had to back it out. Normally they come to you with a large amount, put it was put in as a grant number and an appropriation and the Council approved both. Councilman Bauer states this is functioning like a journal entry. Ms Perry responds since you approved it twice, you have to approve their backing it out. Councilman Bauer states his next question is 8D and it goes to negative numbers and he asked it last month and didn't have an answer. He states under 8-13, you have adult ed grant of negative \$102,000, is this another journal entry. Ms Perry states you would have to ask the Board of Education; what happens sometimes is the State gives them a grant and then it may be reduced so they have to reduce their records by that amount but they can speak to that. Councilman Bauer states he is uncomfortable with negative numbers in grants; doesn't Finance have some concerns. Ms Perry responds we know it is more like a journal entry; they are adjusting funds because the State adjusted funding or they didn't spend all the funds so they have to adjust it. Councilman Bauer states if he could ask the final two grants and in 8E and 8F, there were questions in the community about School Readiness and are the schools receiving the entire amount and he would like confirmation that the \$2,075,200 is the entire amount and going directly to the School System. Ms Perry states we don't hold anything back. They send reports to the State and we get reimbursed. Councilman Bauer states 8F is School Readiness; Ms Perry replies it is a different grant within the School Readiness. Councilman Bauer it all goes to the school. Ms Perry states they will use it for the School Readiness program.

The Chair recognizes Councilman Streeto who asks to address questions to the Parking Director, Mr. Thazhampallath Thazhampallath. Councilman Streeto states we were talking before the break about 10H and using a license plate technology for enforcement. He asks how long the data is kept. Mr. Thazhampallath states he is checking with the vendor and he can ask about the security measures they use for the license plate numbers they have on file for tickets. Councilman Streeto has concerns; one of the features is a phone app that would allow you to increase the time remotely and it will associate a phone number with a license plate and if the data is in the same place, then his license plate and phone are linked in a data file and if I paid with a credit card, then all are linked in a data base. I don't know who your cell phone carrier is, but the carriers now, on request of the police turn over the data. What safeguards will be in place so that the data will not be turned over to anyone requesting it. Mr. Thazhampallath will turn these questions over to the Chief of Police. Councilman Streeto if the

information is shared with Verizon and if a law enforcement agency asks for the information it will be given out. Mr. Thazhampallath it is like security cameras; if you use a device on eBay with a credit card, but security is in place. Minds putting the features together are thinking about it and I would refer you to Eldon Bailey. I am only keeping it for parking purposes, but I can see how other towns are using it. Some towns are using license plate readers to collect back taxes. It is used in many ways and applications. Councilman Streeto asks if they can cut Verizon from this loop and he is not kidding. If anyone from law enforcement calls Verizon and asks for cell phone information on you, it will be in the mail. Mr. Thazhampallath states if he doesn't use Verizon, he would use Sprint and they would respond the same way.

Councilwoman Kleckowski asks about enforcement and what happens if you don't key in your license plate. Mr. Thazhampallath that is the risk they have if they park on Main Street; they have handed out over 17,000 overtime parking tickets. That won't change. You can take the risk of not going to the kiosk, but they are changing enforcement. Councilwoman Kleckowski asks about the extended time and we are sitting some place and key in our cellphone number, we get a text that your time is about to expire if we choose to do so when we enter. Mr. Thazhampallath explains that you have the option to choose to have a text message. Councilwoman Kleckowski that is different from the app and it is two separate actions. Mr. Thazhampallath the app is for me; he chose this vendor because parkers don't want an additional password, so all you have to do is choose the cellphone. Councilwoman Kleckowski states it doesn't work with cash, but you can't increase the amount unless you return to the kiosk. Mr. Thazhampallath that is correct.

Councilman Giuliano states if I understand you, I put my credit card info into the kiosk I get parking and I put my cell phone in, I get a text message and if I need time, it gives it to me and it isn't an app and I don't give it extra information; it uses what I already gave it. Mr. Thazhampallath responds yes.

Councilwoman Russo Driska states she has questions for Michiel Wackers; she was given additional information by the Council Clerk, but it is not signed. Do we know who it is from. The Chair responds a member of the public and it will be addressed during public comment. She asks about the Riverfront Final Report and Councilman Daley certainly can chime in; she asks was this report given to and discussed by the full Commission; Mr. Wackers responds it was voted on by the Commission and approved. Councilwoman Driska asks do we know the vote; Mr. Wackers replies it was seven to two.

**3. Questions to Directors Closes.**

The Chair, hearing no further comments from the Council members, closes the questions to Directors portion of the meeting.

**4. Meeting adjourned.**

Councilman Streeto moves to adjourn and his motion is seconded by Councilman Giuliano. The Chair declares the meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

ATTEST:

MARIE O. NORWOOD  
Common Council Clerk